

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BRASIL 01456 01 OF 04 281331Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6242
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCSOUTH QUARRY HTS
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
CH USDEL JBUSMC RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 BRASILIA 1456

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS MPOL MASS MORG PGOV BR
SUBJECT: US-LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY RELATIONS
REF 77 STATE 306726

THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS REGARDING US-LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY
RELATIONS (REFTEL) WERE PREPARED BY AMBASSADOR CRIMMINS JUST
PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM BRAZIL. THEY REPRESENT CONSIDERATIONS
HE WOULD HAVE ADVANCED AT THE CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING IN WASHINGTON

BEGIN TEXT.

1. I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER SOME GENERAL AND INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS
RELEVANT TO THE ISSUES SPECIFICALLY POSED BY OR LATENT IN THE DEPART-
MENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE (REFTEL). I MAKE THIS IN THE BELIEF THAT A
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PAGE 02 BRASIL 01456 01 OF 04 281331Z

REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE ISSUE OF MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE
COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA WOULD SHOW THAT THERE ARE FEW AREAS OF
POLICY MORE ENCRUSTED WITH CLICHE-THINKING, MORE AFFECTED BY THE
AUTOMATIC PROTECTION OF SACRED COWS, MORE INHIBITED BY TIMIDITY
IN CHALLENGING DECADES-OLD MYTHS, SOME OF THEM DISTRESSINGLY SENTI-
MENTAL, AND MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE CLAIMS OF UNCHALLENGABLE
INSTITUTIONAL EXPERTISE.

2. THE FIRST COMMENT CONCERNS THE BASIC REASONS FOR MAINTAIN A MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH A GIVEN COUNTRY IN LATIN AMERICA OR ANY OTHER REGION. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE ARE THREE: FIRST, THE CLASSICAL ONE ARISING FROM THE RECOGNITION THAT A NATION'S ARMED FORCES ARE A VISIBLE EXPRESSION OF ITS NATIONHOOD AND OF ITS POWER IN THE WORLD AND THAT THEREFORE A MILITARY REPRESENTATION--USUALLY ATTACHES--IS AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT, ALMOST CEREMONIAL IN CHARACTER, OF STATUS; SECOND, THE ADVANCEMENT AND PROTECTION OF THE SENDING NATION'S SECURITY INTERESTS THAT CAN BE AFFECTED BY THE RECEIVING NATION. WHEN THOSE SECURITY INTERESTS CAN BE THREATENED BY THE RECEIVING STATE, I.E., WHEN THE RECEIVING STATE IS A REAL OF OR POTEN

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TIAL ADVERSARY, THE RELATIONSHIP HAS INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION THROUGH ATTACHES AS ITS BASIC PURPOSE, (ALTHOUGH, OF COURSE, THE "STATUS-RECOGNITION" ELEMENT IS ALSO PRESENT). WHEN THE RECEIVING NATION CONTRIBUTES OR CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE SENDING NATION'S SECURITY INTERESTS, I.E., WHEN IT IS A REAL OR POTENTIAL ALLY AGAINST COMMON ADVERSARIES, THE FORM AND CONTENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP DEPEND UPON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE SENDING STATE'S SECURITY BY THE RECEIVING STATE. THE RELATIONSHIP MAY GO BEYOND THE ATTACHE LEVEL AND TAKE THE FORM OF SPECIAL MILITARY MISSIONS WHOSE PURPOSES CAN BE THE CONDUCT OF JOINT PLANNING, TRAINING, THE PROVISION OF ADVICE OF VARIOUS KINDS, AT VARIOUS LEVELS ,
PROVISION OF MILITARY SUPPLIES OR A COMBINATION OF ALL OF THESE. THE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BRASIL 01456 01 OF 04 281331Z

DUTIES AND SIZE OF THE MISSION, AS WELL AS THE SCOPE AND SIZE OF THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED, DEPEND , ON THE SENDING STATE'S SIDE, ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE RECEIVING STATE TO THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE SENDING STATE. THE THIRD REASON IS
THE
ADVANCEMENT OF THE SENDING STATE'S BROAD POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS, AS DISTINCT FROM ITS SECURITY ("NATIONAL DEFENSE") INTERESTS, THROUGH THE MAINTENANCE OF A MILITARY TIE WITH THE RECEIVING
STATE'S ARMED FORCES. THE PURPOSE HERE IS TO INFLUENCE THOSE ARMED FORCES TO ASSUME POSITIONS IN THE COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT FAVORABLE TO THE INTERESTS OF THE SENDING STATE. THIS INFLUENCE WOULD BE EXPECTED

TO BE ADDITIONAL TO THAT EXERTED BY OTHER EXISTING MEANS. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE SENDING STATE'S MILITARY REPRESENTATION AND THE PROGRAMS IT MAY CONDUCT IN THE PURSUIT OF INFLUENCE DEPEND ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RECEIVING STATE'S ARMED FORCES IN THE COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT. THEIR SUSCEPTIBILITY TO INFLUENCE IN BEHALF OF THE SENDING
STATE'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IS, OF COURSE, A HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONING FACTOR.

3. TAKING FOR GRANTED, AS THE QUESTIONNAIRE APPEARS TO DO, THE EXISTENCE OF THE "CLASSICAL" MOTIVE FOR A MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, I WANT TO COMMENT FIRST ON THE TWO ASPECTS OF QUESTION "A" OF REFTEL. IT IS EVIDENT THAT IN SOME COUNTRIES THERE ARE NO US SECURITY INTERESTS TO BE SERVED

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 01456 02 OF 04 281436Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 BRASILIA 1456

BY A MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, YET, BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MILITARY IN THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRY, THERE IS, AT LEAST THEORETICALLY, SOME BENEFIT IN HAVING MILITARY LINKS AS A POTENTIAL RPT POTENTIAL MEANS OF INFLUENCING THE POLICIES AND CONDUCT OF THE GOVERN

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MENT OF THAT COUNTRY IN WAYS CONSISTENT WITH OUR INTERESTS. (SEE BELOW FOR A DISCUSSION OF THE "INFLUENCE" ISSUE.) IN SUCH COUNTRIES, THE REATIONALE FOR A MILITARY TIE WOULD BE ENTIRELY POLITICAL. (PARAGUAY IS ONE CASE IN POINT.)

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE MAY BE SOME COUNTRIES OF GENUINE IMPORTANCE TO THE SECURITY NEEDS OF THE US, THAT IS, COUNTRIES WHICH, BY THE APPLICATION OF RIGOROUSLY OBJECTIVE STANDARDS, ARE JUDGED TO

HAVE NOW, OR REALISTICALLY TO HAVE IN A DEFINABLE FUTURE, FORCES,
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PAGE 02 BRASIL 01456 02 OF 04 281436Z

INSTALLATIONS OR REAL ESTATE WHICH, SHOULD THEY BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE US IN TIME OF EMERGENCY (THIS BEING AN IMPORTANT CONDITION), WOULD MAKE A TRULY MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION TO OUR OWN DEFENSE. IN SUCH COUNTRIES, A MILITARY TIE WOULD BE IMPORTANT, THE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE BEING DETERMINED, AGAIN, BY THE VALUE, ACCURATELY ASSESSED, OF THE COUNTRY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR OWN DEFENSE AND THE LIKELIHOOD, LIKewise STRICTLY ESTIMATED, THAT THE CONTRIBUTIONS WOULD IN FACT BE MADE OR HAVE BEEN ALREADY ASSURED. IF SUCH SECURITY-SENSITIVE COUNTRIES WERE ALSO TO HAVE POLITICALLY POWERFUL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS, THEN THE "POLITICAL" JUSTIFICATION FOR A MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE ADDED TO THE "SECURITY" JUSTIFICATION.

5. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE TWO CONSIDERATIONS DO NOT ALWAYS CO-EXIST. IN SOME COUNTRIES WHICH, AT LEAST PRIMA FACIE, ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR OWN SECURITY, IF ONLY AS ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS OF GEOGRAPHICALLY IMPORTANT FACILITIES OR REAL ESTATE, THE MILITARY ARE SECONDARY OR NON-EXISTENT AS POLITICAL FACTORS (MEXICO, THE BAHAMAS, COSTA RICA COME TO MIND.) IN OTHERS, BOTH ELEMENTS ARE STRONGLY PRESENT. (PANAMA, UNDER THE NEW TREATIES.) AMONG STILL OTHERS, THE MIX OF THE TWO ELEMENTS VARIES. IN FACT, THE COMPOSITE CONSTANTLY CHANGES WITH RESPECT PARTICULARLY TO THE INTERNAL POLITICAL ROLE OF THE MILITARY AND, MORE SLOWLY, WITH RESPECT TO THE REAL OR POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO OUR DEFENSE, AS THE STRATEGIC APPRECIATION AND STRATEGIC MEANS EVOLVE. IN THIS ORDER OF IDEAS, IT IS FAIR TO SAY AS A GENERAL PROPOSITION THAT THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO US --IN TERMS OF OUR OWN DEFENSE NEEDS--IS MUCH LESS THAN IT WAS AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II. AT THE SAME TIME, THE INTERNAL POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE MILITARY IN SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES IS, IN GENERAL, CURRENTLY GREATER. THIS CONDITION ALSO IS CLEARLY SUBJECT TO CHANGE, HOWEVER, AS THE OPENLY DECISIVE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN POLITICAL LIFE AND THEIR PRESTIGE BEGIN, IN SOME COUNTRIES, TO YIELD TO DOMESTIC--AND TO SOME DEGREE, INTERNATIONAL--PRESSURES. TO THE EXTENT
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PAGE 03 BRASIL 01456 02 OF 04 281436Z

THAT THE "POLITICAL" JUSTIFICATION FOR A US MILITARY RELATIONSHIP IS PREDOMINANT OR EXCLUSIVE, OUR MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR WEIGHT AND PROMINENCE IN THE ARRAY OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS AVAILABLE TO US HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE SHIFTS, UP OR DOWN, IN THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE HOST MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS. ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL--AND DIFFICULT--ASSESSMENTS THAT MUST CONSTANTLY BE MADE CONCERNS THE EXTENT TO WHICH CLOSE IDENTIFICATION WITH A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT THAT IS MANIFESTLY UNPOPULAR--EVEN AT THE HEIGHT

OF ITS POWERS--COMPROMISES US OVER THE MIDDLE TERM BY MAKING US
APPEAR HOSTILE TO, AND THUS ALIENATING US FROM, EMERGING (OR RE-
EMERGING) POLITICAL FORCES.

6. WE MUST ALSO CONSTANTLY ASSESS THE NET ADVANTAGE TO US OF A
CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT THAT IS OPENLY HOS-
TILE TO OUR POLICIES. AGAINST OUR SECURITY INTEREST, IF IT EXISTS,
OR OUR "INFLUENCE" INTEREST(WHICH IN THE POSITED CIRCUMSTANCES
WOULD BE INOPERATIVE) WE MUST WEIGH THE COSTS OF, FIRST, APPEAR-
ING TO BE READY TO SACRIFICE OUR POLICIES (WITH THE RISKS OF
ENCOURAGING RATHER THAN REDUCING RESISTANCE TO THEM AND OF INFLATING
OUR PARTNER'S ESTIMATE OF ITS IMPORTANCE TO OUR SECURITY),
AND, SECOND, OF SOWING DISILLUSIONMENT AND CONFUSION AMONG THE
SUPPORTERS OF OUR POLICIES IN THE COUNTRY CONCERNED, IN OTHER
COUNTRIES AND IN THE UNITED STATES ITSELF. AS EXPERIENCE HAS
CONSISTENTLY DEMONSTRATED, THE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR MIDDLE-AND
LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF SHORT-TERM EXPEDIENCY CAN BE SEVERE OVER
TIME.

7. IN THE LIGHT OF THIS OBSERVATION AND THE NEED TO TAKE CAREFUL
ACCOUNT OF THE FLUCTUATING POLITICAL POWER OF THE MILITARY AND THE
PRECEDING COMMENT ABOUT THE EVOLUTIONARY NATURE OF US POLITICO-
MILITARY THINKING, IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE CATALOGUE
OF JUSTIFICATIONS FOR MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS IN LATIN AMERICA
INVOLVING SECURITY ASSISTANCE NO LONGER GIVES PROMINENCE TO "INTERNAL
DEFENSE". (PANAMA MAY BE AN EXCEPTION.) WHEN ONE LOOKS BACK ONLY A
FEW YEARS TO A TIME WHEN PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND CONGRESSIONAL REPRE-
SENTATIONS WERE REplete WITH REFERENCES TO THE NEED
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 BRASIL 01456 02 OF 04 281436Z

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 01456 03 OF 04 281447Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 BRASILIA 1456

FOR US TO IMPROVE "INTERNAL DEFENSE", THE CHANGE IS STRIKING. THE REASONS, BOTH ON OUR SIDE AND THE SIDE OF THE RECIPIENTS, FOR THE CHANGE CERTAINLY NEED NO DISCUSSION HERE, BUT THE RECOGNITION IMPLIED IN THE CHANGE THAT WE CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT ASSURE THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS QUO IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD IS HEALTHY AND WELCOME. AT THE SAME TIME, THE NEAR-REMOVAL OF "INTERNAL DEFENSE" FROM THE JUSTIFICATORY LEXICON FOR AT LEAST THE GREAT MAJORITY OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES (I SAY "NEAR-REMOVAL" BECAUSE OF THE RATHER STARTLING REFERENCE IN RECENT CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY TO "INTERNAL STABILITY" AS A REASON FOR OUR MILITARY PROGRAMS IN NICARAGUA), SAYS, IT SEEMS TO ME, A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE TRUE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF MOST OF THE REGION, AS WELL, OF COURSE, ABOUT THE GROWING MATURITY AND SELF-RELIANCE OF THE COUNTRIES THEMSELVES.

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PAGE 02 BRASIL 01456 03 OF 04 281447Z

8. ANOTHER EVIDENCE OF THE CHANGED SITUATION WORTHY OF COMMENT IS THE RESORT BY MANY COUNTRIES OF THE REGION TO ARMS SUPPLIERS OTHER THAN THE US. IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS DEVELOPING IN SOME SECTORS IN THE US A THESIS, NOT TO SAY MYTH, THAT THIS PRACTICE ON THE PART OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES BEGAN WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT POLICIES OF THIS ADMINISTRATION. SOME OF THE MORE EXTREME OPPONENTS OF THE POLICIES SEEM TO SUGGEST THAT WE HAVE HAD A MONOPOLY THAT IS BEING DISMANTLED. ALTHOUGH IT IS CLEAR THAT THE REACTIONS BY SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS TO HUMAN RIGHTS STRICTURES HAVE NEWLY INTENSIFIED THE MOVEMENT AWAY FROM THE US AS A SOURCE, THE TREND BEGAN MANY YEARS AGO, AS ANY NUMBER OF STUDIES BY LIBBY HYMAN OF INR HAVE DEMONSTRATED. IN THE MID-SIXTIES, AS NOW, LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY RESTRICTIONS AND THEIR IMPAIRMENT OF OUR RELIABILITY AS A SUPPLIER PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN ACCELERATING THE TREND, BUT EVEN IN CASES WHERE NO RESTRICTIONS EXISTED, SEVERAL COUNTRIES, AMONG THEM BRAZIL, OPTED FOR NON-US SUPPLIERS ON THE BASIS OF COLD-BLOODED ASSESSMENTS OF ADVANTAGE OF COST AND ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY USEFUL TO THE STIMULATION OF THEIR OWN PRODUCTION CAPACITY. IN ADDITION, THE TREND WAS CAUSED, IN SOME OF THE MORE

ADVANCED COUNTRIES, BY A DESIRE TO GET OUT FROM UNDER A RESTRAINING AND EVER MORE UNWELCOME DEPENDENCE UPON THE US. THUS, PURCHASES FROM OTHER SUPPLIERS COULD BE LOOKED UPON AS PART OF THE GENERAL THRUST TOWARD DIVERSIFICATION OF RELATIONS.

9. EVEN IF THERE WERE NO USG POLICY TO REDUCE THE ARMS TRAFFIC, AT LEAST OUR SHARE OF IT, WOULD THE TREND AWAY FROM US EQUIPMENT BE BAD FOR OUR INTERESTS? IT IS PROBABLY TRUE THAT WE HAVE BEEN MORE RESPONSIBLE SUPPLIERS OF ARMS TO LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES THAN THE OTHERS, IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND SOPHISTICATION AND HENCE THE COST OF THE ARMS AND IN TERMS OF THE READINESS TO SELL THEM TO COUNTRIES IN ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT. BUT HIS EXERCISE OF RESPONSIBILITY HAS NOT BEEN WITHOUT ITS PATERNALISTIC OVERTONES AND THUS ITS POLITICAL COSTS. IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT FROM A PURELY
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BRASIL 01456 03 OF 04 281447Z

COMMERCIAL POINT OF VIEW, WE HAVE TAKEN LOSSES, BUT THESE HAVE NOT BEEN GREAT IN OUR OVERALL TRADE BALANCE WITH LATIN AMERICA, NOR IN RELATION TO OTHER SUBSTANTIAL ARMS MARKETS.

10. THE ARGUMENT THAT OUR OWN DEFENSE IS IMPAIRED BY THE PRESENCE IN LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES OF NON-US EQUIPMENT WOULD SEEM TO HAVE LIMITED MERIT. FOR ONE THING, THE IDEAL OF "STANDARDIZATION" IS A CHIMERA IMPOSSIBLE OF REALIZATION IF ONLY BECAUSE NO MAJOR COUNTRY IN LATIN AMERICA IS ANY LONGER PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE DEPENDENCE ON THE UNITED STATES THAT THE CONCEPT ENTAILS, EVEN SHOULD WE SUDDENLY BECOME AN ENTIRELY RELIABLE SUPPLIER. FOR ANOTHER, THE ARGUMENT PRESUPPOSES A DEGREE OF LATIN AMERICAN OPERATIONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH US IN AN EMERGENCY THAT SEEMS VERY QUESTIONABLE GIVEN ESPECIALLY, THE LIMITED CAPABILITIES OF EVEN MAJOR LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES VIEWED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DISCERNIBLE THREAT. FOR STILL A THIRD, WESTERN EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT, WHICH IS THE GREAT BULK OF NON-US SUPPLIES, WOULD NOT APPEAR TO CREATE MAJOR PROBLEMS, EVEN IF THE UNLIKELY CONTINGENCY OF MAJOR COMBINED OPERATIONS WERE TO COME ABOUT. SOVIET EQUIPMENT WOULD BE ANOTHER THING IN SUCH A CONTINGENCY, OF COURSE, BUT WE SHOULD BE WARY OF EXAGGERATIONS OF THE READINESS OF LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS TO "GO SOVIET".

11. THE FINAL MAJOR PREOCCUPATION OF THOSE DISTRESSED BY LATIN AMERICAN PURCHASES OF NON-US EQUIPMENT IS THAT THE OTHER SUPPLIERS WILL ACQUIRE POLITICAL "INFLUENCE" THAT WILL BE INIMICAL TO OUR BROAD INTERESTS. LEAVING FOR LATER A DISCUSSION OF THE ASSUMPTION THAT UNDERLIES THIS ARGUMENT, I FIND IT HARD TO SEE HOW OUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIPS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPAIRED BY ARMS SALES FROM OUR ALLIES, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE HAVE LONG RECOGNIZED NOT ONLY THE INEVITABILITY BUT ALSO THE NET DESIRABILITY OF GENERAL DIVERSIFICATION BY LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES AWAY FROM US. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SOVIETS ARE, AGAIN, ANOTHER MATTER, IF ONLY BECAUSE ANY SOVIET EFFORTS TO MOVE INTO NEW ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA ARE HISTORICALLY SUSPECT

AND PRODUCTIVE OF INSTINCTIVELY NEGATIVE REACTIONS BY US.

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 01456 04 OF 04 281458Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 4 OF 4 BRASILIA 1456

12. THE CENTRAL ISSUE IS, HOWEVER, HOW MUCH "INFLUENCE" DO WE AND OTHERS, INCLUDING THE SOVIETS, REALLY OBTAIN FROM ARMS SALES? THIS ISSUE IS OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, ONLY A DETAIL OF A LARGER ONE, THAT IS, THE UTILITY OF MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS IN GENERAL AS MEANS OF ACQUIRING, RETAINING AND EXERTING INFLUENCE. FOR A VERY LONG TIME, A CONSTANT OF POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES HAS BEEN (OR AT LEAST WAS) THE PROPOSITION THAT, WITH REGIMES WHICH WERE RUN BY THE MILITARY OR IN WHICH THE MILITARY WERE POWERFUL, A STRONG MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING EQUIPMENT SALES OR GRANTS, AND A SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY PRESENCE WERE IMPORTANT, IF NOT ESSENTIAL, TO CONSTRUCT CHANNELS OF INFLUENCE TO BE USED TO FURTHER BROADEN US INTERESTS. THE IDEA HAS BEEN THAT, BECAUSE OF SPECIAL TIES BETWEEN THE US AND LATIN MILITARIES, CREATED AND BUTTRESSED BY THE APPLICATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES, THERE WOULD BE A READINESS ON THE PART

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BRASIL 01456 04 OF 04 281458Z

OF THE HOST MILITARY TO ACT IN OUR FAVOR WITHIN THE COUNCILS OF GOVERN-
MENT ON MATTERS OF IMPORT TO US. THIS WAS PROBABLY NOT AN UNREASON-
ABLE THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT IN THE LATE 40'S AND THE 50'S. IT MAY
EVEN HAVE OCCASIONALLY WORKED IN PRACTICE AT THAT TIME. BUT IT
SEEMS TO ME THAT, AS THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA, AT LEAST THE
MORE IMPORTANT COUNTRIES, HAVE GROWN MORE MATURE, AS THEY HAVE
BECOME LESS DEPENDENT, AS THEY HAVE ACQUIRED GREATER STANDING IN
THE WORLD AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE NORTH-SOUTH CONFLICT AND THEIR OWN
DEVELOPMENT, AND AS THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN US HAVE BECOME MORE
CONTENTIOUS, THE INSTANCES OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SO-CALLED CHANNEL
OF INFLUENCE HAVE BECOME VERY RARE INDEED. VERY FEW, IF ANY,
LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY-DOMINATED GOVERNMENTS ARE NOW PREPARED. IF
EVER THEY WERE PREPARED, TO GO AGAINST THEIR PERCEIVED INTERESTS
ON A MAJOR ISSUE BECAUSE OF A PRESUMED AFFINITY WITH, OR SUS-
CEPTIBILITY TO, THE US MILITARY, NO MATTER HOW LARGE THE US MILITARY
PRESENCE OR HOW USEFUL US EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING MIGHT BE.

13. THE HOPED-FOR POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY
FORCES CONCERNING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES OF MOMENT
TO US BECOMES EVEN MORE OF A WILL-OF-THE-WISP WHEN THE MILITARY
ESTABLISHMENTS ARE THE MAJOR PROTAGONISTS WITHIN GOVERNMENTS OF
POSITIONS INIMICAL TO OUR OWN. (NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND HUMAN
RIGHTS VIOLATIONS COME QUICKLY TO MIND.) WHEN POWERFUL INSTITUTIONAL
INTERESTS OF THE ARMED FORCES ARE JOINED TO, OR INDEED DETERMINE,
NATIONAL INTERESTS AND POLICIES, SPECIAL RESPONSIVENESS BASED ON
MILITARY TIES BECOMES, I WOULD ARGUE, EVEN LESS LIKELY. OFTEN,
IN FACT, SOMEWHAT OF THE REVERSE OCCURS. THE LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY
ESTABLISHMENTS REACT AGAINST THEIR AMERICAN MILITARY INTERLOCUTORS
AND
EXPRESS DISMAY AND SHOCK AT THEIR "LACK OF UNDERSTANDING".
FREQUENTLY, MOREOVER, THE LATIN AMERICAN SERVICES APPEAL TO THE
MYSTICAL BONDS OF THE "INTERNATIONALE OF ARMED FORCES" AGAINST
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BRASIL 01456 04 OF 04 281458Z

THE "DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY THE POLITICIANS". THIS PLAY IS OFTEN
ACCOMPANIED BY THE COMMENT ALONG THESE LINES: "THESE PROBLEMS BROUGHT
ABOUT BY POLITICIANS DO NOT AFFECT THE GOOD RELATIONS BE-
TWEEN US. WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER." THE MOST EXTREME CASES, A
KIND OF "REVERSE INFLUENCE" IS ATTEMPTED WITH THE PURPOSE OF ENCOURAG-
-
ING THE US MILITARY TO ACT AS A LOBBY WITHIN THE USG IN ORDER TO
EXPLAIN THE "REALITIES" AND TO SEEK ADJUSTMENTS IN THE OFFENDING
POLICIES. (I AM SATISFIED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE GOB CONSIDERS THE
US MILITARY ALONG WITH THE US BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL COMMUNITY AS
OBJECTS OF SPECIAL ATTENTION IN CONNECTION WITH OUR NUCLEAR AND
HUMAN RIGHTS INTERESTS.) IT IS GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT THE VERY
GREAT MAJORITY OF US MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE NOT SUSCEPTIBLE
TO THESE BLANDISHMENTS AND REJECT THE IDEA ADVANCED BY SOME OF

THEIR INTERLOCUTORS THAT MILITARY INTERESTS AND POLICIES ARE SOMEHOW ABOVE OR SOMEHOW DISTINCT OR EXEMPT FROM THE POLICIES OF GOVERNMENTS. THIS PRAISEWORTHY POSTURE DOES NOT, HOWEVER, KEEP LATIN AMERICAN ARMED FORCES FROM PERSISTING. TO SUM UP: AS YOU CAN SEE, I HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY SKEPTICAL OVER THE YEARS OF THE VALIDITY OF THE "CHANNEL OF INFLUENCE" JUSTIFICATION.

14. IN CONCLUDING THESE COMMENTS, I WOULD ONLY SAY THAT ALL OF US HAVE TO TRY TO RID OURSELVES OF EMBEDDED INSTITUTIONAL OR PERSONAL BIASES AS WE EXAMINE THIS VERY IMPORTANT ISSUE AGAIN. I ALSO VENTURE TO SAY THAT, IN THIS FIELD OF POLICY, PERHAPS MORE THAN IN ANY OTHER, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SITUATION OF EACH COUNTRY BE EXAMINED ON ITS OWN MERITS AND IN DETAIL. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE AND EXECUTE GENERAL POLICY FOR "LATIN AMERICA". THE SINGLE MOST CRITICAL ELEMENT IN THE COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY PROCESS MUST BE A COLD-EYED, DISPASSIONATE ASSESSMENT, UNTINGED BY SENTIMENT AND DEVOID OF OUTMODED RHETORIC, OF OUR REAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE CONTEXT OF A GENUINE, REALISTIC THREAT ANALYSIS. END TEXT.

15. DEPT MAY WISH TO PASS TO OTHER ARA CAPITALS AND MILITARY ADDRESSEES AS DESIRED.

JOHNSON

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BRASIL 01456 04 OF 04 281458Z

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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BRASIL01456
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780091-1134
Format: TEL
From: BRASILIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978025/aaaaaebm.tel
Line Count: 522
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 14ccf2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 10
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 306726
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3581285
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY RELATIONS
TAGS: MPOL, MASS, MORG, PGOV, BR, XM, XL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/14ccf2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
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